

REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

The present amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed October 1, 2009. In view of the remarks to follow and amendments above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Status of Claims

Claims 1-5 and 8-17 remain this application. Claim 1 has been amended. The claims are not believed to be narrowed in scope and no new matter is added.

Interview Summary

Applicants appreciate the courtesy granted to Applicant's attorney, Michael A. Scaturro (Reg. No. 51,356), during a telephonic interview conducted on Wednesday, November 25, 2009. During the telephonic interview, independent Claims 1 was discussed. Applicant's attorney provided a proposed amendment to claim 1 suggesting the term "*at a common current output node*" to distinguish over the cited art. The Examiner indicated that the cited art does not show this feature. The Examiner also indicated that a further search will be required.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC 102

In the Office Action, Claims 1-5 and 8-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,091,689 ("Taniguchi"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Claims 1-5 and 8-17 are allowable

Claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over Taniguchi, however, Independent claim 1 has been amended herein to better define Applicant's invention over Taniguchi. It is therefore respectfully submitted that claim 1 now recites limitations and/or features which are not disclosed by Taniguchi. Accordingly, the cited portions of Taniguchi do not anticipate claim 1, because the cited portions of Taniguchi fail to disclose every element of claim 1. For

example, the cited portions of Taniguchi fail to disclose or suggest, “*wherein at least one current output of a first optical detector unit is connected directly at a common current output node to a corresponding current output of a second optical detector unit at an output node, said output node being directly connected to a processing terminal of the signal processing circuit so that the processing terminal is directly connected to both the at least one current output of the first optical detector unit and the corresponding current output of the second optical detector unit*”, as recited in claim 1 [Emphasis Added]. It is respectfully submitted that a careful examination of Taniguchi will show that the recitations of claim 1 are clearly not met. Taniguchi discloses an optical disc system 100 in which an optical device 102 can be employed in which laser couplers LC1, LC2 to LCn are used to read from and write to an optical recording medium 104. **Additionally, there is provided a selector 108 to switch between the laser couplers LC1 to LCn as necessary.** Applicants respectfully note that the selector switch 108 of Taniguchi does not have a common current output node connecting the laser couplers LC1, LC2 to LCn. Accordingly, Taniguchi fails to disclose or suggest, “*wherein at least one current output of a first optical detector unit is connected directly at a common current output node to a corresponding current output of a second optical detector unit at an output node, said output node being directly connected to a processing terminal of the signal processing circuit so that the processing terminal is directly connected to both the at least one current output of the first optical detector unit and the corresponding current output of the second optical detector unit*”, as recited in claim 1 [Emphasis Added].

Hence claim 1 is allowable and claims 2-5, 8-14 and 16 are allowable, at least by virtue of their respective dependence from claim 1.

Independent Claim 15 has been amended to recite similar subject matter as Claim 1 and therefore contains the limitations of Claim 1. Specifically, Claim 15 recites in relevant part - *the first optical detector unit and the second optical detector unit each comprising an array of detector segments **and being connected together to a common current output node** defining a current output of the first optical detector unit and the second optical detector unit.*

Hence, for at least the same reasons given for Claim 1, Claim 15 is believed to contain

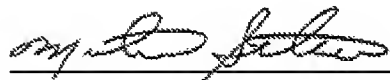
patentable subject matter. Claim 17 is allowable, at least by virtue of its respective dependence from claim 15.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all claims presently pending in the application, namely, Claims 1-5 and 8-17 are believed to be in condition for allowance and patentably distinguishable over the art of record.

If the Examiner should have any questions concerning this communication or feels that an interview would be helpful, the Examiner is requested to call Mike Belk, Esq., Intellectual Property Counsel, Philips Electronics North America, at 914-945-6000.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Michael A. Scaturro', is written over a horizontal line.

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